

Connections

Maine Citizen Corps Council...creating safe, healthy, secure communities

Operation Keep ME Warm

Operation Keep ME Warm is the Governor's initiative to winterize low income senior citizen homes. The project is a first of its kind and is also the largest volunteer effort the state has seen in quite awhile. Many agencies were involved in the planning effort and several businesses and corporations made monetary donations. Perhaps the most invaluable service was provided by the county EMA offices, CAP Agencies, American Red Cross and other county coordinators who served as the primary contacts for volunteers and homeowners. Feedback from the volunteers was overall positive. Cara Anderman, Americorps VISTA Volunteer at Winthrop High School said, "It was great to be able to spend the day getting to know Jake and working together to hopefully help a couple stay warm this winter." On average, teams consisted of three to four members who visited roughly three homes in one day. Thank you to all who participated in one way or another. Know that you were part of a state-wide effort to help Maine citizens be more comfortable this winter season.



Winthrop High School Team Cara Anderman and Jake Clark



Kennebec County contact Ginny Ricker assists volunteers Jo-Ann Choate and Beth Nagusky with paperwork



Teammates Susan Cheesman and Chip Curry pack the car



Chip Curry secures poly sheeting



Todd Cheesman in action



Materials at MDOT



Volunteers hard at work

Training video is a collaborative effort



The task of putting together a demonstration training video for the volunteers would not have been possible without the collaborative effort of several people.

Mark Houdlette, Visual Information Specialist for the Maine Army National Guard, was the lead person in making the video available in the short allotted time. Beth Nasberg, Pro Account Sales Associate for the Home Depot, was responsible for finding the well-versed demonstrators, as well as providing a the space and materials on which to demonstrate. Anne-Marie Dittenhoffer and Les Dearborn, both Home Depot employees, were the on-camera talent. Katy Stebbins of Maine

Citizen Corps assisted with the behind the scenes work, Jo-Ann Choate of Maine State Housing Authority provided the script for the voice over, Maine Audio Visual Services and Downeast Duplicating of Kennebunk were in charge of getting the one thousand copies made in time. The Maine Commission for Community Service was in charge of distributing the videos to team leaders. Within the short time of three weeks, the demonstrations were filmed, edited, copied, and in the hands of volunteers. Some scenes of the training video were cut due to constraints on the length of time. The video featured such demonstrations to install: door weather strips, door sweeps, shrink wrap window covers, interior and exterior caulking, caulk rope, pipe insulation, foam in a can sealant, and outlet gaskets. Copies of the videos were mailed to team leaders and it was also posted on the website www.volunteermaine.org. Congratulations to the crew for a job well done!

Queen Mary II visits Maine and allows chance for drill

Monday, September 27th, people gathered around Bar Harbor to catch a glimpse at the largest, longest, tallest, widest and most expensive ocean liner ever built. The visit not only gave citizens a chance to gaze at the beauty, but also allowed the opportunity for Hancock County and State of Maine officials to test out some equipment and run a homeland security drill. Ralph Pinkham, Hancock County EMA Director worked with Olan Johnston and Tony Tommasoni, M.D. of the Maine Strike Team to get a feel for what kind of kinks to expect in the future. The exercise included all aspects of public safety, Emergency Management, Maine Army National Guard Weapons of Mass Destruction Team, U.S. Attorney's Office and the CIA for intelligence dissemination as well as the Civil Air Patrol and numerous other agencies. The Maine Strike Team, a contingent of the Northern New England Metropolitan Medical Response System, was briefed in the morning and throughout the day participated in a table top exercise with various scenarios and met with the local health system representatives. This gave them a chance to not only talk about the technical components inherent to this type of deployment, but also to get a feel for the local and regional volunteer systems in place and activated for this. After a long day of visiting Maine, the Queen Mary II sailed out of Bar Harbor without incident.



PrepareME Corps VISTAs Celebrate End of Service

PrepareME Corps completes its first year!

VISTA members achieved an astonishing amount in just 12 months. Some of the extraordinary ways Maine has become safer and better prepared through the PrepareME Corps actions include:

- ▶ 50 Mainers are now trained as Disaster Action Team Members and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Members. This increases trained local American Red Cross volunteers by 25%.
- ▶ A Maine database (<http://mainecert.intranets.com>) has been created and populated to ensure continued administration of CERT programming.
- ▶ A motivational program is being developed to ensure that CERT participants are recognized and their skills tested throughout the year.
- ▶ Thanks to the help of local County Emergency Management Agencies and their VISTA Members, Five local Citizen Corps Councils have been established in York, Cumberland, Somerset, Waldo, and Aroostook Counties as a way to ensure continuity of health and human services in Maine during emergencies.
- ▶ The State Citizen Corps Council, in conjunction with United Way and the Maine Commission for Community Service, has identified <http://volunteersolutions.org> as the statewide inventory of volunteer resources during an emergency. An emergency module is being designed to ensure the system of matching volunteers to opportunities is effective and efficient in an emergency.
- ▶ Of the 183,402 seniors (65+) living in Maine, 60% have been identified and contacted with disaster preparedness information. The VISTA Members serving Retired Senior Volunteer Programs (RSVP) statewide have been getting preparedness materials to seniors living in senior facilities, those attending health fairs, and those living in isolated areas.
- ▶ Members learned American Red Cross method for evaluating and certifying shelters. They worked together throughout the year to get all shelter lists updated and notebooks complete.
- ▶ Money was granted by the Maine Emergency Management Agency to create a statewide shelter database. The database was created and is currently being populated by VISTA members with information gathered throughout the year. This data will be available as an online resource to all emergency officials during an emergency or disaster.

This is just a sampling of the incredible work a small group of dedicated volunteers, in collaboration with many local and state agencies, can accomplish with motivation, support, and education.

Thank you PrepareME Corps VISTA Members for making a huge difference in Maine!

Thank you Site Supervisors for helping the VISTA Members be successful at their mission!

Shannon Drury, American Red Cross Mid-Maine
 Eric Sawyer, EMA Cumberland County
 Rob Gaiser, American Red Cross Eastern Maine
 Amy Michaud, ARC of Southern Maine-York County Service Area
 Carol Walsh, RSVP-Eastern Area Agency Aging
 Jere Scola, RSVP-Southern Maine Area Agency on Aging

Patty Drury, EMA Somerset County
 Ken Keaton, EMA Aroostook County
 Beverly Sinclair, EMA York County
 Elizabeth Fontaine, RSVP-Coastal CAP
 Katy Stebbins, State Citizen Corps Council
 Daniel Cadaret, RSVP-Health Reach



News and Updates



Blaine House Conference on Volunteerism is a hit

The 18th Annual Blaine House Conference on Volunteerism, "Leading Maine through Service" was presented by the Maine Volunteer Connection and the Maine Commission for Community Service. This one day conference featured a welcome from Governor John E. Baldacci and Keynote address by Susan Ellis. The day was full of several various workshops attendees chose to participate in. During the closing ceremonies, Communities for Children Americorps VISTAS were sworn in by the Secretary of State. Over 240 participants attended the conference.

Citizen Corps booth included at MMA conference

The Maine Municipal Association Annual Convention is held in October, bringing together municipal officials from all over the state for two full days of workshops, seminars, discussions, and meeting and visiting with exhibitors. More than 100 providers of products, materials, and services to local governments are exhibitors in an Exposition setting featuring heavy and large equipment displays and traditional booths. Maine Citizen Corps was one of these.



Next Meeting Held In January 2005

The next Maine Citizen Corps Council will be held Friday, January 14th at the Central Maine Commerce Center located at 500 Civic Center Drive. The meeting will be from 9 a.m. until noon in the Fallen Heroes conference room. For more information, please contact Olan Johnston at Olan.Johnston@maine.gov or at 626-5240.